Appl. No. 10/617,903
Amdt. Dated August 4, 2004

Amendments to the Claims:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (currently amended)   A computer-implemented product design method comprising

retaining a plurality of ~~product~~ layouts, ~~each layout including~~ having one or more image containers, ~~each image container~~ having an associated size and position in the layout,

retaining a plurality of images, ~~each image being associated with~~ having one or more associated selection criteria,

in response to the receipt of at least one selection criterion ~~from a user,~~ providing one or more product designs ~~for displaying to the user,~~ the one or more product designs having been generated from one or more retained images associated with at least one ~~of the~~ received selection criteria ~~entered by the user~~ and one or more retained layouts.

2. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein the size of each image container in the retained layouts is one of a plurality of pre-determined sizes.

3. (previously presented)   The method of claim 2 wherein each retained image is retained in a size that is one of the plurality of pre-determined sizes.

4. (previously presented)   The method of claim 3 wherein at least some of the retained images are organized into a plurality of image groups, each image group containing images that are variations of the same base image.

5. (previously presented)The method of claim 3 wherein the one or more product designs are generated from one or more retained images having sizes corresponding to the sizes of the one or more image containers in the one or more retained layouts.

6. (previously presented)   The method of claim 2 further comprising retaining instructions for generating versions of retained images corresponding to at least some of the plurality of pre-determined sizes, and wherein versions are generated to correspond to the sizes of one or more image containers in the one or more retained layouts.

7. (previously presented)   The method of claim 6 wherein the instructions for generating a version of a retained image include the height and width of the version and the location of a point in the retained version from which the height and width are measured.

8. (previously presented)   The method of claim 6 wherein the instructions for generating a version of a retained image include the location of at least two points in the retained version from which the height, width and position of the version can be determined.

9. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 further comprising retaining a plurality of color schemes for use in generating the at least one product image.

10. (previously presented)   The method of claim 9 wherein each retained image is associated with one of the retained color schemes, wherein one image container in each layout is the dominant image container, and wherein the color scheme associated with the image in the dominant image container of a layout is used to generate a product design controls the color scheme used in the product design.

11. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein the one or more retained layouts are selected based on the type of product being designed by the user.

12. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein at least one selection criterion entered by the user is the desired number of images in the layout and wherein the one or more retained layouts have a number of image containers corresponding to the desired number of images.

13. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 wherein at least one selection criterion associated with each image is a keyword and wherein at least one selection criterion entered by the user is a keyword.

14. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1 further comprising

incorporating user-supplied content into the product design, and

producing a quantity of a product in physical form from the product design.

15. (currently amended)   A product design system comprising

a server system having data storage means ~~and means for communicating with a client system~~,

a plurality of layouts stored on the server system, ~~each layout including~~ having one or more image containers, ~~each image container~~ having an associated size and position in the layout,

a plurality of images stored on the server system, ~~each image~~ and being associated with one or more selection criteria, and

means responsive to at least one selection criteria ~~from a user of the client system for transmitting one or more product designs to the client system, the~~ for generating one or more product designs ~~having been generated by the server system from~~ by combining at least a portion of one or more retained images associated with at least one of the selection criteria ~~entered by the user~~ and one or more retained layouts.

16. (previously presented)   The system of claim 15 further comprising means for combining one or more stored layouts and one or more stored images to generate product designs.

17. (previously presented)   A computer program stored on a server system operatively connected to at least one client system, the server system having a plurality of stored layouts, each layout including one or more image containers, each image container having an associated size and position in the layout, and a plurality of stored images, each stored image being associated with one or more selection criteria, the program comprising

computer code adapted to download to and execute in a client system and to display one or more selection criteria tools to a user of the client system, and

computer code adapted to execute on the server system, including computer code adapted to receive one or more selection criteria from the client system, and computer code adapted to send to the client system one or more product designs, the one or more product designs being generated from one or more stored images associated with the received selection criteria and one or more stored layouts.

18. (previously presented)   The computer program of claim 17 further comprising computer code adapted to combine one or more stored layouts and one or more stored images to generate product designs.

19. (previously presented)   The computer program of claim 18 wherein the size of each image container in the stored layouts is one of a plurality of pre-determined sizes, wherein each stored image is stored in a size that is one of the plurality of pre-determined sizes.

20. (new)   An automated design method comprising:

selecting at least one layout from one or more retained layouts having one or more image containers,

selecting at least one image from a plurality of retained images,

determining at least the size of at least one image container in at least one selected layout, and

creating at least one cropped image version for at least one image container of at least one selected layout by performing at least a cropping operation on at least one selected image.

21. (new)   The method of claim 20 further comprising preparing one or more product designs by combining the at least one selected layout with the at least one cropped image version to create at least one product design.

22. (new)   The method of claim 21 further comprising providing at least one created product design for displaying to a user of the product design system.

23. (new)   The method of claim 20 wherein the step of selecting at least one image is performed in response to one or more user inputs received from a user of the product design system.

24. (new)   The method of claim 23 wherein at least some of the retained images have one or more image selection criteria associated therewith and wherein the one or more user inputs comprise one or more image selection criteria.

25. (new)   The method of claim 24 wherein one or more image selection criteria are one or more keywords.

26. (new)   The method of claim 20 wherein the step of selecting at least one layout is performed in response to one or more inputs received from a user of the product design system.

27. (new)   The method of claim 26 wherein the one or more user inputs comprise information identifying the type of product being designed.

28. (new)   The method of claim 20 wherein the step of creating includes resizing the selected image prior to performing a cropping operation.